The Night Prayer in Ramadaan

By Imaam Muhammad Naasir-ud-Deen Al-Albaanee

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Introduction to the Second Edition

All praise be to Allaah, and may the peace and blessings be on the Messenger of Allaah, his family, his Companions and whoever follows his Sunnah. To Proceed:

This is the second printing of my treatise **"The Night Prayer in Ramadaan"**, which I am presenting to the noble reader on this occasion of the near approach of the blessed month of Ramadaan, 1406H. After all the copies of the first printing ran out, and the requests for the book became many, I took another look at the treatise and revised and improved it, adding several hadeeth references and new points of benefit to it, which I hope will please the readers, Allaah willing. The reader will find the most important of these changes in the section on 'Itikaaf.

I ask Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, to connect me to what is right and to forgive me for what my understanding missed from correctness and from what truth escaped my pen. I ask Allaah that He make this book sincerely for His Face, indeed He is the All-Pardoning, Most Generous.

'Ammaan (Jordan)
Sha'baan 7, 1406H
Written by Muhammad
Naasir-ud-Deen Al-Albaanee

Introduction to the First Edition

Verily, all praise is due to Allaah. We praise Him, we seek His assistance and we ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our selves and the evils of our actions. Whoever Allaah guides, no one can lead him astray, and whoever is led astray, no one can guide him. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allaah – He stands alone and with no partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) is His slave and messenger.

To Proceed:

It is authentically reported on Ibn Mas'ood (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) in *mawqoof* form,[1] but it takes the ruling of being *marfoo'* [2] as a saying of the Prophet, that he said:

"How will you be when a *fitnah* (calamity, i.e. innovation) engulfs you such that the adult will grow old (with it) and the youth will be raised upon it, and the people will take it as a Sunnah? So when any part of it (i.e. the innovation) is abandoned, it will be said: 'Have you abandoned the Sunnah?'

They said: **"When will that be?"**

He said: **"(It will be) When your scholars have passed away, your reciters have increased, your Fuqahaa have become few, your leaders become many, your trusted ones decrease, the worldly life is sought after by (doing) the works of the Hereafter, and knowledge is sought for a reason other than the Religion."** [3]

I say: This hadeeth is one of the signs of his (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) Prophethood and the verity of his Messengership, for indeed every one of its portions has become actualized in this present time. From them is the spread of various innovations, which the people are tested with, such that they have taken them as a Sunnah and (part of the) Religion to be followed. So when the real Ahlus-Sunnah turn away from them towards the Sunnah, which is authentically

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[1] **Translator's Note:** A Mawqoof Hadeeth is a narration "suspended" or stopped to just being a saying or action of a Companion, and not that of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

[2] **Translator's Note:** A Marfoo' Hadeeth is a hadeeth reported by a Companion but "raised" as being a saying or action of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

[3] Reported by Ad-Daarimee (1/64) with two chains of narration, the first of which is authentic while the second is *hasan*. It is also reported by Al-Haakim (4/514) and others.

established on the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), it will be said: **"Has the Sunnah been abandoned?"**

This is what has befallen us – Ahlus-Sunnah – in Shaam, when we revived the Sunnah of performing the Taraaweeh Prayer with eleven rak'aat, whilst persevering in them upon tranquility and submissiveness and using the various authentic words of remembrance (*adhkaar*), according to one's ability. This is something, which a majority of those who regularly perform the Taraaweeh Prayer with twenty rak'aat have left off. And on top of this, their fury and rage kindled and unleashed when we produced our treatise "*Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh*", which is the second of several treatises found in our book "*Tasdeed-ul-Isaabah ilaa man za'ama Nusrat-al-Khulafaa ir-Raashideen was-Sahaabah*." This was due to what they saw in it from the assertion that:

1. The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did not perform the Taraaweeh Prayer with more than eleven rak'aat.

2. 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) ordered Ubay (bin Ka'ab) and Tameem ad-Daaree to lead the people in Taraaweeh Prayer performing eleven rak'aat according to the authentic Sunnah.

3. The report**: "The people would perform the Night Prayer during the time of 'Umar in Ramadaan making twenty rak'aat"** is a *shaadh* [4] and *da'eef* report, which contradicts the report (above in Point 2) of reliable narrators, who state that it was eleven rak'aat and that 'Umar commanded this.

4. Even if this *shaadh* report was authentic, it is more deserving to accept and act upon the authentic report due to its being in accordance with the Sunnah in number. Also, there is no mention in it that 'Umar ordered that twenty rak'aat be performed, but rather it is only the people who did that. This is contrary to the authentic report, which states in it that 'Umar ordered eleven rak'aat.

5. Also, if it were authentic this does not mean that one is obligated to act upon it whilst abandoning acting upon the authentic report, which is in agreement with the Sunnah, such that the one who acts upon the Sunnah is considered as leaving the Jama'aah! On the contrary, the most we can derive and extract from this hadeeth is that it is permissible to pray twenty rak'aat (for Taraaweeh) yet it is

[4] **Translator's Note:** A Shaadh Hadeeth is a hadeeth reported by a reliable narrator but which is contradicted by another hadeeth that is more reliable than it.

definitive that what the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did and practiced regularly (of 11 rak'aat) is better.

6. We also explained in it that performing twenty rak'aat is not authentically established upon any of the noble Companions.

7. And we clarified the falseness of the claim of those who allege that the Companions unanimously agreed on (performing) twenty rak'aat.

8. We also clarified the proof, which necessitates that one act upon the number that is authentically reported in the Sunnah (i.e. eleven rak'aat), and those scholars who rejected increasing upon this number. This goes as well for the other points of benefit we mentioned that can rarely be found gathered together in one book.

All of these points were supported by clear proofs from the authentic Sunnah and from the established narrations. This is what caused the ruthless ones amongst a group of elder blind followers to lash out at us – some of them in their sermons and lessons and others in treatises, which they wrote to refute[5] our afore-mentioned treatise. However, all of them were void of beneficial knowledge and of the proofs that indicate it. Instead they are filled with abuses and insults, as is the custom of the people of falsehood when they direct their words to the truth and its people. Due to this, we don't see any benefit in that we should waste our time in replying to them and in exposing the errors in their words. This is because life is too short to spend time in doing that due to their numerous amounts, may Allaah guide them all.

But there is no harm in mentioning one of them as an example, whom I consider to be the most noble and knowledgeable amongst them.[6] However, if knowledge is not accompanied by sincerity and upright manners, the harm it brings for the one who possesses it will be greater than its benefit, as the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) indicated in his saying:

"The example of the one who teaches the people good but forgets it himself is like the example of a lamp that gives light for the people yet burns itself out." [7]

[5] The last of them according to what I am aware of is Muhammad 'Alee As-Saaboonee in his treatise, which he named "The Prophet's Authentic Guidance regarding the Taraaweeh Prayer." Look for a reply to it in the introduction to the fourth volume of my book *Silsilat-ul-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah*.

[6] He is Shaikh Isma'eel Al-Ansaaree, an employee at the bureau of Iftaa in the city of Riyadh.

[7] Reported by At-Tabaraanee and Ad-Diyaa Al-Maqdisee in *Al-Mukhtaarah* from Jundub with a good chain of narration. Also see *Saheeh At-Targheeb* (1/56/127)

This person I have indicated wrote a treatise with the title **"Authenticating the Hadeeth of the Taraaweeh Prayer being Twenty Rak'aat and a Refutation against Al-Albaanee in his Declaring it Weak!"** In this book, the author has fallen out from the path of the people of knowledge with regard to rebutting arguments with arguments and proofs with proofs. And he has fallen short from being truthful in speech and in being far removed from misleading the people towards the opposite of the truth. So now we will give an example of this, while trying to be brief in our introduction, so we say:

1. Everyone that reads the title of the treatise we mentioned above will think that he is referring to the *marfoo'* hadeeth about the twenty rak'aat, which is weak according to the unanimous agreement (of the scholars). But if he reads its opening pages it will become clear to him that the author intends by it the narration (*athar*) reported from the path of Yazeed bin Khaseefah from Saa'ib bin Yazeed, that he said:

"They would perform the Night Prayer during 'Umar's time in the month of Ramadaan with twenty rak'aat!!"

So by this, the reader will come to know that the subject of the book refers to one thing while the title of the book refers to something entirely different! This is a direct form of deception, we ask Allaah to grant us safety and protection.

2. Another example of this is that he fills three pages of his treatise (pg. 14-16) defending the afore-mentioned Yazeed bin Khaseefah, trying to establish that he is *thiqqah* (reliable). The reason for this is so that he can cause the readers – who will find that a number of the Imaams have declared him reliable – to think that I have contradicted all of them by my declaring him weak! But this is not the case, because I have indeed followed them in their declaration of his reliability, as will be mentioned later.

3. In fact, this author over-passed the limit of deceit and deception with the above towards clear and open lying and opposing the truth, as he said (pg. 15):

"Indeed Al-Albaanee claims that he has been declared weak."

And this is a clear lie, for in reality I asserted in my treatise (pg. 57) that he was *thiqqah* (reliable)! The most I said of him was:

"He is alone in reporting (this narration), which the (other) reliable narrators have not reported. So in this case, his hadeeth are to be rejected **if he is opposed by one who is more reliable/trustworthy than him.** The narration will then become *shaadh* as has been established in the Science of Mustalah (Hadeeth Terminology). And this narration falls in this category…"

This kind of talk, even if it may be considered belittling one who is reliable according to the scholars, it does not mean that he is *da'eef* (weak) and to be rejected absolutely. Rather, on the contrary of that, it only means that: His hadeeth are to be accepted unrestrictedly ***unless*** there is another (more authentic) report that contradicts it. This is what conclusion I came to in the last portion of my words mentioned above, where I said:

"And this narration falls in this category…"

This is what all of my words, which I indicated before, in my treatise revolved around. But this critic chose to neglect all of that and instead ascribe to me that which I did not say. So Allaah, the Most High, will hold him to account!

4. However, this slander was not enough for the Shaikh, for he even ascribed another lie to me, saying (pg. 22):

"So it is not proper for the one who abandons the report of Yazeed bin Khaseefah, whom all of the Imaams rely on, to instead accept the report of 'Eesaa bin Jaariyah [8] as a proof, when Yahyaa bin Ma'een declared him weak, as did … and …"

The truth is that I did not rely solely and unrestrictedly on the report of 'Eesaa as proof. Rather, I indicated that it is not to be relied on solely as proof, and that was when I said (pg. 21):

"Its chain of narration is hasan (sound) based on what was mentioned before it."

This is since if I were to have relied on it solely as a proof, as the Shaikh fabricates, I would not have said: **"…based on what was mentioned before it."**

So this statement is a clear indication that this reporter is not from those who the one speaking of him relies on as proof. Rather he is from those whom he considers

[8] **Translatror's Note:** A narration that is in support of eleven rak'aat

to be weak, and who is only taken from based on supporting witnesses (narrations). So his hadeeth are declared sound (*hasan*) if there is found a narration that serves as a witness for it. And in this case, this supporting witness is present, which is the hadeeth that I indicated when I said: **"…based on what was mentioned before it."** This is the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*) who said:

"The Messenger of Allaah would not perform more than eleven rak'aat (for the night prayer) in Ramadaan or out of it." This hadeeth was reported by the two Shaikhs (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) and others.

So is the Shaikh so ignorant about the Science of Hadeeth to the level that he doesn't understand the likes of this sentence: "Its chain of narration is *hasan* (sound) based on what was mentioned before it?!" This is especially the case since I added further clarification to it when I repeated this hadeeth with another verification (pg. 79-80), this time quoting Al-Haythamee as declaring it *hasan* (sound). And then I followed that up with my comment:

"It is most likely that its chain of narration is *hasan* (sound) in my view, and Allaah knows best."

Or is a willful disregard and pure fabricating caused by some malice in his heart? May Allaah have mercy on the one who said:

"So if I don't know, then this is a calamity
And if I know, then the calamity is greater."

And what will show the reader that this Shaikh in fact knows (!) – is the statement he made after mentioning the hadeeth of Jaabir: **"Do not use anything from the deceased animal"** blindly following those who declared this hadeeth *hasan*:

"Therefore it is not appropriate for Al-Albaanee to declare a *hasan* hadeeth weak simply because there exists another path of narration for it which is weak, for this is contrary to what the Imaams of this Science have agreed on."

So therefore, when I declared the afore-mentioned hadeeth of 'Eesaa bin Jaariyah *hasan* based on the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah serving as a supporting witness for it, the Shaikh had full knowledge that I did this based on "what the Imaams of this Science have agreed on!" Due to this, he could not put any blame on me regarding

that, so he took recourse in fabricating the statement that I relied on him solely as proof so as to soothe the rage in his heart, and Allaah will hold him to account!

Furthermore, will not the noble reader note along with me the way this Shaikh plays around with the knowledge-based facts, for if it weren't proper for me, as he claims, to declare the hadeeth of Jaabir weak because, according to his claim, there is another path for it which is weak, as he himself admits, even if it does come by way of blind-following. So I must ask, is it then proper for him to declare weak the other afore-mentioned hadeeth of Jaabir regarding the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) praying Taraaweeh with eleven rak'aat (?), when it has an authentic supporting witness in the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*), found in the two Saheehs, which he can see in these two collections for himself?!!

Does this not mean that this Shaikh is playing games with double standards!? We ask Allaah for His Help, and there is no might nor power except by Allaah's Leave!!

I will add to this now, in order to clarify one of the facts that Shaikh Isma'eel Al-Ansaaree, may Allaah guide him, fails to see:

I said before **"according to his claim"** only to point out that this path (of narration), which he quotes from some that it is *hasan* and for which he criticizes me that I weakened, when he himself holds that there is '*ananah* between Abuz-Zubair and Jaabir, it itself is the "other" path due to which the first hadeeth becomes strengthened by (i.e. it's one path), for its extent reaches as far as only Abuz-Zubair only, as is stated in *Nasab ar-Raayah* (1/122).

So does the Shaikh's knowledge hold that from "what the Imaams of this Science have agreed on" is that it is permissible to strengthen a weak hadeeth based on itself and not by one similar to it?! Or is he just following his desires and attempting to support certain Shaikhs even if it is in opposition to the truth!? Or is he just blind following the example ash-Shawkaanee sets in *Nayl-ul-Awtaar*, which excels in quoting and gathering ahaadeeth, yet lacks proper verification and research in explaining these ahaadetth?!!

However, this does not prevent me – by Allaah's blessing and success – from asserting here that later on I found a strong supporting witness for this hadeeth of Jaabir, and with its (same) wording, in the narration of Ibn 'Ukaym (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*). I did not find anyone before me who mentioned it or indicated it. In my

opinion, its chain of narration is authentic, as you will see explained in my book *Irwaa-ul-Ghaleel* (1/78):

So if Shaikh Al-Ansaaree really wanted to display knowledge, advice and counseling, he would not have erred by making one path of narration into two paths and he would have been kind to us by directing us to this supporting witness as an evidence. But the matter is as is commonly said: **"One who doesn't have something cannot give it."** For indeed I saw him mention in his reply (pg. 48) that the hadeeth of Ibn 'Ukaim was reported by ad-Daraqutnee and that its meaning and the meaning of the hadeeth of Jaabir were one and the same!

And with this, by Allaah, I don't know – nor do I think that he knows – why he only specifically mentioned ad-Daaraqutnee as reporting this hadeeth apart from all the rest of the compilers of the Sunan, even though his wording and their wording of the hadeeth is one: **"Do not use any part of the deceased animal – neither the skin nor the interior."**

And his claim that it bears the same understanding as the hadeeth of Jaabir is not acceptable because this hadeeth is more specific than it, as is quite apparent. So he has missed out on the wording, which is, word for word, in accordance with the wording in the hadeeth of Jaabir.

So all praise be to Allaah who guided me, even if it was after a long time, to it (i.e. the supporting hadeeth). And no one censured me due to my previous unawareness of it, and if someone did, then we ask Allaah for His pardon and forgiveness in this life and the next.

5. But the Shaikh did not stop short with the afore-mentioned fabrications on me, for he went on to attribute to me (pg. 41) that I claim the Salaf were ignorant! Glory be to You Allaah, this is a tremendous slander!

The truth is that I did not commit any sin according to the Shaikh and his likes from the blind followers and malice-ridden individuals other than that I call to the following of the Salaf as-Saalih (Pious Predecessors) and to the adherence of their *madh-hab* (way), and not the *madh-hab* of certain individuals amongst them. This is what drove the Shaikh to take this position of argumentation and rancor against me, conforming to the blind-follower crowd who do not know anything from the Religion except for what they found their fathers and grandfathers practicing, except for those whom Allaah protected, and how few they are.

And from what I find strange about this Shaikh is that he went over all of these points that I indicated previously for which I asserted their correctness – and I have no doubt that he agrees with me in some of them to say the least or most of them – yet he did not state clearly his position with regard to them. For example, there is our statement: "Affirming the authenticity of the *athar*[9] does not necessitate that we are to abandon acting upon the other report which is in accordance with the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah that: **"The Prophet would not perform more than eleven rak'aat (for the night prayer) in Ramadaan or out of it."**

Is it better to act upon his (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) Sunnah or to act upon what the people did during the time of 'Umar, assuming that it is authentically reported that they did that?!

The Shaikh did not state clearly his position in that regard because if he were to incline towards what opposes the Sunnah, his condition would be exposed amongst Ahlus-Sunnah. And if he were to incline towards the Sunnah, he would then have to agree with Al-Albaanee! This is one of the things he did not allow himself to do for some reason or for many reasons, which are not hidden from the sensible reader!

So this is an example of one of the replies we examined out of the several refutations we received against our treatise "*Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh*." And it is from the most exemplary of refutations. But in spite of this, we have made the reader aware of some examples from it, which clearly show a lack of fairness and remoteness from following the way of the scholars, who do not seek anything except to clarify the truth. And if this author is from the most noble and knowledgeable of those who replied (to my treatise), then what by Allaah can we say about the others who replied who do not have any knowledge or good manners?!

Furthermore, some lengthy time had passed since the printing of our afore-mentioned treatise *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh*, and necessity called for the reprinting of it. Throughout the course of the book, its objectives were fulfilled and its goals were met, the most important of which is informing the people about the Sunnah regarding the Taraaweeh Prayer and refuting those who oppose it. And this was

[9] **Translator's Note:** An Athar (lit. narration/report) is generally reserved for a narration reported from a Companion or a Taabi'ee as his saying. Here, Imaam Al-Albaanee is referring to the athar reported by Yazeed bin Khaseefah that the people would pray twenty rak'aat for the Night Prayer during the time of 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*).

such that this Sunnah spread throughout many of the masaajid in Syria, Jordan and other Islamic lands. So all praise be to Allaah, through whom all good deeds come to pass. Due to this, I felt it was appropriate to abridge that treatise in a pure and clear knowledge-based manner without putting forth a refutation against anyone in it, based on the extent of the saying: "Put your words forth and then move on." So I decided to summarize all of the knowledge-based points of benefit, that were found in the "original source" (i.e. the book *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh*), adding to it other points of benefit, in order to complete the benefit. We ask Allaah to grant benefit through it just as He granted benefit through its prior editions, and that He reward me for it. Verily, He is the most Generous of those who are asked.

The Night Prayer in Ramadaan

The Virtue of Performing the Night Prayer in Ramadaan:

1. It has been reported in two hadeeths, the first of which is from Abu Hurairah, that he said: "Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) would incite (them) to perform the Night Prayer in Ramadaan, without firmly commanding them.

So he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) would say: **'Whoever performs the Night Prayer in Ramadaan with firm Faith and hoping to be rewarded, his past (minor) sins will be forgiven.'**

Then Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) passed away and the matter remained in this condition.[10] Then this condition persisted during the Khilaafah of Abu Bakr (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) and a portion of the Khilaafah of 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*)." [11]

The second hadeeth is that of 'Amr bin Murrah al-Juhanee, who said:

"A man from Qudaa'ah came to Allaah's Messenger and said to him: 'O Messenger of Allaah, what do you say if I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah and that you are the Messenger of Allaah, and if I were to pray the five daily prayers and fast and pray the night prayers during the month of Ramadaan, and give the Zakaat?"

So the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"Whoever dies upon this state, will be amongst the siddeeqeen[12] and the martyrs."** [13]

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[10] I.e. that of not holding a congregational prayer for Taraaweeh.

[11] Reported by Muslim and others and it is also found in Al-Bukhaaree with the *marfoo'* statement from the Prophet. It has been related with all its transmissions in *Irwaa-ul-Ghaleel* (4/14/906) and in *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (1241). May Allaah make easy for me the ability to complete it and then publish it. The brother Zuhair (ash-Shaweesh) said in his comments to my treatise "The Two 'Eid Prayers" (pg. 32), which was reprinted in 1404H: "Allaah facilitated the publishing of the first volume of *Saheeh Abee Dawood* of our teacher Al-Albaanee." But I don't know, by Allaah, how this could be when I still have the first volume and I did not allow anyone to make a copy of it or print it or distribute it. Similar to this is what he stated in the fourth printing of my book *At-Tawassul* in 1403H (pg. 22) that the third volume of *Silsilat-ul-Ahaadeeth ad-Da'eefah* was published, when up to this date (Rajab of 1406H) it has not yet been printed!

[12] **Translator's Note:** Siddeeq is a title given to those who were the first to believe in the Prophets and also those who bear witness to truth during times of hardship. And Allaah knows best.

[13] Reported by Ibn Khuzaimah and Ibn Hibbaan in their *Saheeh* collections, as well as others, with an authentic chain of narration. See my comments to Ibn Khuzaimah (3/340/2262) and *Saheeh At-Targheeb* (1/419/993)

The Night of Al-Qadr and its Fixed Time:

2. The best night in Ramadaan is the Night of Al-Qadr, based on the Prophet's saying: **"Whoever performs the night prayer on the Night of Al-Qadr [and is then granted it] with firm faith and hoping to be rewarded, his past sins will be forgiven."** [14]

3. It is on the twenty-seventh night of Ramadaan according to the strongest opinion. A majority of the ahaadeeth comply with this, including the hadeeth of Zurr bin Hubaysh who said: "I heard Ubay bin Ka'ab (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) say when it was said to him that 'Abdullaah bin Mas'ood (radyAllaahu 'anhu) said 'Whoever performs the night prayer (every night) throughout the year will achieve the Night of Al-Qadr.' He (Ubay bin Ka'ab) said:

'May Allaah have mercy on him, his intention was that the people not (grow lazy) and depend solely (on just one night). By the One whom there is no deity worthy of worship beside Him, it is indeed in Ramadaan. And by Allaah I know on which night it is. It is on the night that Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) **commanded us to perform the Night Prayer. It is on the twenty-seventh night. Its sign is that the sun rises on its following morning bright with no rays.'"**

In one report this is raised to being a saying of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).[15]

The Legality of Performing the Night Prayer in Congregation:

[14] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and others from the narration of Abu Hurairah (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) and by Ahmad (5/318) from the narration of 'Ubaadah bin As-Saamit (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*). The addition to it in [...] belongs to him and to Muslim from Abu Hurairah. **Important Note:** In the first printing of this book, I used to mention another addition to the last part of this hadeeth, with the wording: **"and his future sins"** basing this grading on the authentication of Al-Mundhiree and Al-'Asqalaanee for it. Then Allaah enabled me to thoroughly investigate the paths of this hadeeth and its reports from Abu Hurairah and 'Ubaadah, which I did not find anyone else do. So it became clear to me that this addition **"and his future sins"** is *shaadh* from Abu Hurairah and *munkar* from 'Ubaadah. So I came to the conclusion that those who declared the report of Abu Hurairah *hasan* and the report from 'Ubaadah *saheeh*, this was based on their position regarding the apparent narrators of the chain along with a lack of investigating the reports. I confirmed this in a very vast discussion, which I placed in *Silsilat-ul-Ahaadeeth ad-Da'eefah* (no. 5083). This is why I didn't cite this addition to the hadeeth of Abu Hurairah when I mentioned it in *Saheeh at-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb* (982), nor did I mention the hadeeth of 'Ubaadah with it, contrary to the original form of *At-Targheeb*. And Allaah, the Most Exalted, is the One who grants success.

[15] Reported by Muslim and others and it is referenced in *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (1247)

4. Performing the Night Prayer in congregation is legislated in the Religion. In fact this is better than praying it individually due to the Prophet establishing it himself and due to his explaining its virtue in his saying, as is found in the hadeeth of Abu Dharr (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) who said:

"We fasted Ramadaan with Allaah's Messenger, but he did not lead us in (congregation) in the Night Prayer during any month until there only remained seven days, so then he lead us in Night Prayer until a third of the night had passed away. When the sixth night came, he did not lead us in the Night Prayer. Then when the fifth night (i.e. 25th night) came, he lead us in prayer until half the night had passed. So I said: 'O Messenger of Allaah! Can we finish the rest of the night praying?' So replied:

'Indeed when a man prays with the Imaam until he finishes, it is recorded for him that he prayed the entire night.'

So on the fourth night, he didn't establish the night prayer. On the third night (i.e. the 27th night),[16] he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) gathered his family, his wives and the people and lead us in the night prayer until we feared that we would miss the *falaah* (success)." I said: "What is the *falaah*?" He (Abu Dharr) said: "The *Suhoor* (pre-dawn meal). Then he did not lead us in the night prayer for the rest of the month." [17]

The Reason why the Prophet did not continue performing the Night Prayer in Congregation:

5. The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) only discontinued establishing Taraaweeh in Congregation for the remainder of the month for fear that the Night Prayer would be made obligatory upon them in the month of Ramadaan, and thus they would not be able to handle it. This is stated in the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah which is found in the two Saheehs and other collections.[18] But this fear came to an end with his (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) death, after Allaah had completed the

[16] He means by this the 27th night of Ramadaan, which is the Night of Al-Qadr, according to the most correct view, as has been stated previously. This is why on this night the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) gathered his family and his wives. So there is proof in this that it is recommended for the women to attend the congregation on this night.

[17] An authentic hadeeth reported by all the compilers of the Sunan and others. It is referenced and verified in (my book) *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 16-17), *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (1245) and *Irwaa-ul-Ghaleel* (447).

[18] See its wording and referencing in my book *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 12-14)

Laws of Islaam. And because of this, the effect caused by this fear also came to an end, which was abandoning performing the Night Prayer in congregation during Ramadaan. And its former ruling remained, which is the legality of praying it in congregation. This is why 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) revived it later, as is reported in Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree and other collections.[19]

The Legality of Women performing the Night Prayer in Congregation:

6. It is legislated for women to attend the congregational Night Prayer, as has been mentioned in the previous hadeeth of Abu Dharr. In fact, it is permissible to place a specific Imaam for them to lead them in prayer apart from the Imaam that leads the men. This is because it is authentically reported on 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) when he gathered the people for the Night Prayer, he placed 'Ubay bin Ka'ab to lead the men and Sulaymaan bin Abee Hathma to lead the women. 'Arfajah ath-Thaqafee reported:

"'Alee bin Abee Taalib (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) would order the people to establish the Night Prayer in the month of Ramadaan. And he would place an Imaam for the men and another Imaam for the women. I used to be the Imaam for the women." [20]

In my opinion, this applies only if the masjid is wide and ample enough such that one group will not disturb the other.

The Number of Rak'aat in the Night Prayer:

7. The number of rak'aat in the Night Prayer is eleven. We prefer that this number not be increased or added to, following the example of Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), for indeed he did not go beyond this number until he parted from this world. 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*) was asked about the Prophet's Night Prayer during Ramadaan, so she responded by saying:

"Allaah's Messenger would not perform more than eleven rak'aat (for the night prayer) in Ramadaan or out of it. He would pray four rak'aat, but do not ask

[19] See its referencing and Ibn 'Abdil-Barr and other's words on it in the book *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 49-52)

[20] This hadeeth and the one before it have been reported by Al-Bayhaqee (2/494). The first one of the two was also reported by 'Abdur-Razzaaq in *Al-Musannaf* (4/258/8722). Ibn Nasr also reported both hadeeths in *Qiyaam Ramadaan* (pg. 93) and then used them as evidence for what we stated (pg. 95)

about how fine or long they were. Then he prayed another four rak'aat, but do not ask about how fine or long they were. Then he would pray three rak'aat." [21]

8. One may subtract from this number even to the point where he lowers it to just one rak'ah for Witr. This is based on evidence found in the Prophet's action and statement:

As for his action, 'Aa'ishah was asked concerning how many rak'aat Allaah's Messenger would perform for Witr, so she replied:

"He would perform Witr with four rak'aat[22] and then three, with six rak'aat and then three, and with ten rak'aat and then three. He would not perform Witr with less than seven rak'aat or with more than thirteen rak'aat." [23]

As for his statement, then it is his (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) saying:

"Witr is true. So whoever wishes then let him perform Witr with five rak'aat. And whoever wishes then let him perform Witr with three rak'aat. And whoever wishes then let him perform Witr with one rak'ah." [24]

Reciting the Qur'aan in Night Prayer:

9. As for reciting the Qur'aan during the Night Prayer in Ramadaan or outside of it, then the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did not set any limit for it, by which one can go beyond or below it. On the contrary, his recitation in the Night Prayer would vary either being long or short. So sometimes he would recite the length of Surah Muzammal, which is twenty ayaat, in every rak'ah. And at other times, he would recite the length of fifty rak'aat. And he would say:

"Whoever prays in a night reciting one hundred verses, he will not be recorded as being from the heedless."

[21] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and others, and it has been referenced in *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (20-21) and *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (1212).

[22] I say: This includes the two sunnah (supererogatory) rak'aat performed after 'Ishaa or the two short rak'aat the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) used to begin his Night Prayer with. This is based on Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr's opinion. See *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 19-20)

[23] Reported by Abu Dawood, Ahmad and others. Its chain of narration is good and Al-'Iraaqee declared it authentic (*saheeh*). I have referenced it in *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 98-99) and in *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (1233).

[24] Reported by At-Tahaawee, Al-Haakim and others. Its chain of narration is authentic, as has been stated by a group of scholars. It has a supporting evidence (hadeeth), which has a rejected addition to it, as I explained in *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 99-100).

And in another hadeeth, he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

"Whoever prays in a night reciting two hundred verses, he will be recorded as being from the devoted and sincere."

One night when the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was sick he recited the seven long surahs, which are: Al-Baqarah, Aali 'Imraan, An-Nisaa, Al-Maa'idah, Al-An'aam, Al-A'raaf and At-Tawbah.

And in the story of Hudhaifah bin al-Yamaan when he performed the Night Prayer behind the Prophet, he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) recited in one rak'ah: Al-Baqarah, then An-Nisaa and then Aali 'Imraan. And he would recite them in a slow and flowing tone." [25]

It is reported with the most authentic chain of narration, that when 'Umar ordered Ubay bin Ka'ab to lead the people in prayer with eleven rak'aat during Ramadaan, Ubay would recite hundreds of verses to the point that those behind him would have to lean on staffs to support themselves due to the length of the standing. And they would not finish until the opening moments of Fajr." [26]

And it is also authentically reported on 'Umar that he called the reciters during Ramadaan and commanded the one fastest in reciting to recite thirty ayaat, the one moderate in reciting to recite twenty-five ayaat and the one slowest in reciting to recite twenty ayaat." [27]

So based on this, if one performs the Night Prayer alone then he may prolong it for as long as he wishes. And this also applies if there is someone praying along with him who agrees to this. Every time one prolongs the prayer it is more virtuous, however one should not exaggerate in prolonging the prayer such that he spends the whole night awake, except in special occasions, following the way of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), the one who said:

"The best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad." [28]

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[25] All of these ahaadeeth are authentic and referenced in *Sifat as-Salaat* (pg. 117-122).
[26] A similar narration to this has been reported by Maalik. See *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 52).
[27] See it's referencing in the afore-mentioned source (pg. 71). 'Abdur-Razzaaq also reported it in *Al-Musannaf* (4/261/497) as did Al-Bayhaqee (2/497).
[28] This is a portion of a hadeeth reported by Muslim, An-Nasaa'ee and others. I have referenced it in *Ahkaam-ul-Janaa'iz* (pg. 18) and *Al-Irwaa* (608).

In the case where he is the Imaam leading the prayer, then he should prolong it only to the extent that it will not cause difficulty for those praying behind him. This is based on the Prophet's statement:

"When one of you leads the people in prayer, he should be light (i.e. shorten) the prayer, for amongst them is the [youth] and the elder, and amongst them is the weak one, [the sick one] [and one who has needs to fulfill]. And if he prays alone, then he may prolong his prayer as long as he wants." [29]

The Time of the Night Prayer:

10. The time for the Night Prayer is from the time after the 'Ishaa Prayer up until the time for Fajr. This is based on the Prophet's saying:

"Verily, Allaah has added a prayer for you, and it is Witr.[30] **So pray it between the 'Ishaa Prayer up to the Fajr Prayer."** [31]

11. Praying in the last part of the night is better for anyone that has the ability to do it, based on the Prophet's (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) saying:

"Whoever fears that he will not be able to get up for the Night Prayer in the last part of the night, then let him pray in the first part of it. And whoever desires to pray in the last part of it, then let him perform the Witr in the last part of the night, for indeed praying in the last part of the night is witnessed (by the angels), and that is better." [32]

12. And if one is faced with the choice of: either praying the first part of the night with the congregation and praying the last part of the night alone, then praying with the congregation is better. This since it will be recorded for him as having prayed the entire night, as we stated in Point 4 in the hadeeth raised to a saying of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

[29] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim. The wording and the additions (in […]) here are from Muslim. I have referenced it in *Al-Irwaa* (512) and *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (759 and 760).
[30] The whole night prayer is called Witr because the number of rak'aat performed in it is Witr, i.e. an odd number.
[31] An authentic hadeeth reported by Ahmad and others from Abu Basrah. I have referenced it in *As-Saheehah* (108) and *Al-Irwaa* (2/158).
[32] Reported by Muslim and others. I have referenced it in *As-Saheehah* (2610).

The Companions continued to act on this practice during the time of 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*), as 'Abdur-Rahmaan bin 'Abdin al-Qaaree related:

"I went out with 'Umar Ibn al-Khattaab one night during Ramadaan to the masjid, when we came upon a crowd of people that were all divided and spread out. One man was praying by himself while another man was praying with a small band of people behind him. So he ('Umar) said: 'By Allaah, I think that if I were to gather these people under one reciter, that would be more practical. Then he became set on this and gathered the people under Ubay bin Ka'ab. Later on, I went out with him another night and the people were praying behind one reciter. So 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) said: 'What an excellent innovation this is. But that time which they sleep in is better than the time they are praying in now.' – meaning the last part of the night. And the people would perform the Night Prayer during the first part of the night." [33]

Zayd bin Wahb said: "'Abdullaah would lead us in prayer during the month of Ramadaan, and then stop by nighttime." [34]

The Manners of Performing the Night Prayer:

13. I spoke in detail about this subject in my book "*Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh*" (pg. 101-115), so I felt that I should abridge that discussion here in order to make it easy for the reader and to remind him:

The First Manner: consists of thirteen rak'aat, which is commenced with two short rak'aat. According to the most correct opinion, these are the two rak'aat of Sunnah prayer offered after 'Ishaa, or they are two specific rak'aat by which one begins the Night Prayer, as has been stated previously. Then one prays two very long rak'aat (after that). Then two more rak'aat are prayed, and then another two rak'aat are prayed. Then two more rak'aat are prayed and another set of two rak'aat are prayed. Then witr is made with one rak'ah.

The Second Manner: consists of thirteen rak'aat. There are eight rak'aat within them, in which one makes *tasleem* after every two rak'aat. Then witr is made with five rak'aat and one does not sit nor make the *tasleem* except in the fifth rak'ah.

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[33] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and others. I have referenced it in *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 48)

[34] Reported by 'Abdur-Razzaaq (7741) with an authentic chain of narration. Imaam Ahmad indicated this narration and the one before it when he was asked: "Should the Night Prayer (Qiyaam), i.e. Taraaweeh, be delayed until the last part of the night?" He replied: **"No, the Sunnah (practice) of the Muslims is more beloved to me."** Abu Dawood reported this in his *Masaa'il* (pg. 62).

The Third Manner: consists of eleven rak'aat, in which one makes *tasleem* after every two rak'aat and then prays witr at the end with one rak'ah.

The Fourth Manner: consists of eleven rak'aat, in which one prays four rak'aat and makes one *tasleem* after the four. The he prays another four in a similar manner and ends it with three rak'aat (for witr).

Would the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) remain in the sitting position after every two rak'aat, when praying a unit of four rak'aat or a unit of three rak'aat? We do not find a clear answer for this, but remaining in the sitting position (for *tashahhud*) while doing a unit of three rak'aat is not legislated (in the Religion)!

The Fifth Manner: consists of eleven rak'aat, in which one prays eight rak'aat and does not sit in any of them except for the eighth rak'ah. While sitting (in the eighth rak'ah), he makes the *tashahhud* and sends Salaat on the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and then stands up again without making the *tasleem*. Then he makes witr with one rak'ah and when finished, he makes the *tasleem*. This consists of nine rak'aat. Then he prays two rak'aat after that while in the sitting position.

The Sixth Manner: One prays nine rak'aat, in which he does not sit except after the sixth rak'ah. Then he makes the *tashahhud* and sends Salaat on the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and then stands again without making the *tasleem*. Then he makes witr with three rak'aat and when finished, he makes the *tasleem*, etc. (the rest is the same as the previous manner)

These are the manners in which it is reported that the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) performed the Night Prayer. It is possible to add other types of manners to it, by subtracting what one wishes from each set of rak'aat until he cuts it down to one rak'ah, acting on the previously mentioned hadeeth of Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*): **"So whoever wishes, then let him pray witr with five rak'aat, and whoever wishes, then let him pray witr with three rak'aat, and whoever wishes, then let him pray witr with one rak'ah."** [35]

So if one wants, he can pray these five rak'aat or three rak'aat with one sitting and one *tasleem*, as is stated in the Second Manner. And if he wants, he can make

[35] See point Number Eight.

tasleem after every two rak'aat, as is stated in the Third Manner, and this is preferred. [36]

As for praying the set of five rak'aat or three rak'aat by sitting after every two rak'aat and not making the *tasleem*, then we did not find any authentic report that the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) used to do this. The *asl* (foundation) is that it is permissible, but since the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) forbade us from praying witr with three rak'aat indicating the reason for that by saying: **"And do not liken it to the Maghrib prayer."** [37] So then anyone that prays the witr in three rak'aat must not liken it to the Maghrib prayer. This can be done in two ways:

1. Making the *tasleem* between the even and odd number rak'ah (i.e. between the second and the third rak'ah). This is what is stronger and preferred.

2. One does not sit between the even and odd number (i.e. he prays three rak'aat straight with one *tasleem*), and Allaah knows best.

The Recitation during the Three Rak'aat of Witr:

14. Regarding the three rak'aat of Witr, it is from the Sunnah to recite in the first rak'ah: Surah Al-A'laa, in the second rak'ah: Surah Al-Kaafiroon, and in the third rak'ah: Surah Al-Ikhlaas. Some time he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) would add the surahs Al-Falaq and An-Naas to the third rak'ah.

It is authentically reported on him (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) that one time he recited one hundred verses from Surah An-Nisaa for the rak'ah of Witr. [38]

The Qunoot Supplication and its Place:

[36] **An Important Point of Benefit:** After mentioning the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah and other narrations regarding the different manners of performing the Night Prayer, Ibn Khuzaimah said in his *Saheeh* (2/194): "So it is permissible for a man to pray any number of rak'aat he wishes for the prayer, which has been reported on the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) that he did, as well as in the same manner that it has been reported that he prayed it. No one is prohibited from doing any of this. This statement according to what is understood from it is completely in agreement with the opinion we have preferred – of sticking to the number that has been authentically reported on the Prophet and not adding to it. So all praise be to Allaah for granting this and I ask Him to continue increasing in His Blessings.

[37] Reported by At-Tahaawee, Ad-Daraqutnee and others. See *At-Taraaweeh* (pg. 99 & 110)

[38] Reported by An-Nasaa'ee and Ahmad with an authentic chain of narration.

15. After finishing the recitation but before bowing one can sometimes perform the Qunoot supplication, which the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) taught to his grandson, Hasan bin 'Alee (*radyAllaahu 'anhumaa*), which is:

"O Allaah guide me with those You have guided, and protect me with those You have protected, and befriend me with those You have befriended. Bless for me what You have given me, and protect me from the evil of what You have ordained. For indeed You ordain and no ordainment can overcome You. He whom You befriend will never be humiliated and he whom You take as an enemy will never be honored. Blessed are You, our Lord, and Exalted. There is no refuge from You except toward You." [39]

And one should sometimes send Salaat on the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) due to what will be mentioned later. [40]

16. There is no harm in placing the Qunoot after the rukoo' (bowing position), and in adding to it by sending curses on the disbelievers, Salaat on the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and supplication for the Muslims, during the second half of Ramadaan, based on this habit being practiced by the Imaams during the time of 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*). It is mentioned in the last part of the afore-mentioned hadeeth of 'Abdur-Rahmaan bin 'Abdin al-Qaaree:

"And they would curse the disbelievers in the second half (of Ramadaan), saying:

'O Allaah! Curse the disbelievers who divert (people) from Your Path, who disbelieve in Your Messengers and who do not believe in Your Promise. Divide their ranks and place terror into their hearts. And send Your punishment and torment upon them, Lord of Truth!'

Then he (i.e. the Imaam) would send Salaat on the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), supplicate for the Muslims what he was able to of good, and then ask Allaah to forgive the Muslims."

He ('Abdur-Rahmaan) then said: "After invoking curses on the disbelievers, sending Salaat on the Prophet, asking forgiveness for the believing men and women and making requests to Allaah, he would say:

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[39] Reported by Abu Dawood, An-Nasaa'ee and others with an authentic chain of narration. See *Sifat as-Salaat* (pg. 95 and 96 of the 7th Edition).

[40] See my comments to the book "The Virtue of Sending Salaat on the Prophet" (pg. 33) and the abridged version of *Sifat Salaat an-Nabee* (pg. 45)

'O Allaah, You we worship and to You we pray and prostrate, and to You we hurry and rush. We hope for Your Mercy, our Lord, and we fear Your stern Punishment. Verily, Your Punishment befalls Your enemies.'

Then he would say the Takbeer and go into the prostrating position." [41]

What should one say in the Last Part of Witr:

17. It is from the Sunnah to say in the last part of Witr [either before the Salaam or after it[:

"O Allaah, I seek refuge from Your Discontentment in Your Contentment, and from Your Punishment in Your Forgiveness. And I seek refuge in You from You. None can count the praises made to You, and You are just as You have praised Yourself." [42]

18. And when one makes the Salaam to end the Witr, he should say: ***"Subhaan al-Malik al-Quddoos, Subhaan al-Malik al-Quddoos, Subhaan al-Malik al-Quddoos"*** (i.e. three times), prolonging his voice while saying it and raising it by the third time. [43]

The Rak'aat that Follow it:

19. He may then perform two rak'aat after this, due to it being authentically reported that the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did it.[44] In fact, he even commanded his ummah to perform these two rak'aat, as he said:

"Indeed this journey is a struggle and a burden, so when one of you prays Witr, then let him offer two rak'aat (afterward). So if he awakens (then he should pray them), and if not, then they are recorded for him." [45]

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[41] Reported by Ibn Khuzaimah in his *Saheeh* (2/155-156/1100)
[42] *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (1282) and *Al-Irwaa* (430)
[43] *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (1284)
[44] Reported by Muslim and others. See *Salaat-ut-Taraaweeh* (pg. 108-109)
[45] Reported by Ibn Khuzaimah in his *Saheeh*, Ad-Daarimee and others. I referenced it in *As-Saheehah*. I used to hesitate in implementing these two rak'aat for an extended amount of time. But when I came across this command of the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), I then began to hold it and implement it. And I realized that the Prophet's saying: **"Make your last prayer at night Witr (odd-numbered)"** was only for a recommendation and not for an obligation. This is the opinion of Ibn Nasr (130).

20. The Sunnah is to recite Surahs: az-Zilzaal and Al-Kaafiroon in these two rak'aat.[46]

[46] Reported by Ibn Khuzaimah (1104-1105) from the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah and Anas, may Allaah be pleased with them, with two chains of narration that strengthen one another. Refer to *Sifat Salaat an-Nabee* (pg. 124).

The 'Itikaaf

It's Prescription:

1. 'Itikaaf (secluding oneself in the masjid) is a recommended act in Ramadaan as well as any other day in the year. The source for that is found in Allaah's saying: **"...while you are making 'Itikaaf in the masaajid."** [Surah Al-Baqarah: 187] And there are also many authentic ahaadeeth about the Prophet's (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) 'Itikaaf and narrations from the Salaf about it, which are mentioned in the *Musannafs* of Ibn Abee Shaybah and 'Abdur-Razzaaq.[47]

It is authentically reported that the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) made 'Itikaaf in the last ten days of Shawaal,[48] and that 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) said to the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*): **"I made an oath (to Allaah) in the Days of Ignorance that I would make 'Itikaaf for one night in the Al-Masjid Al-Haraam, (should I do it)?" The Prophet responded: "Fulfill your oath." So he made 'Itikaaf for one night.** [49]

2. Observing it in Ramadaan is established in the hadeeth of Abu Hurairah: **"Allaah's Messenger would make 'Itikaaf for ten days in every Ramadaan. But when it was the year in which he died, he made 'Itikaaf for twenty days."** [50]

3. The best time to do it is in the last part of Ramadaan because the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) would make 'Itikaaf during the last ten days of Ramadaan until Allaah took his soul (in death).[51]

It's Conditions:

[47] In the previous edition of this book, there used to be here the hadeeth about the virtue of **"Whoever performs 'Itikaaf one day…"**, but then I removed it, after it became clear to me that it was weak. This was after I brought out its references and spoke about them in detail in *Silsilat-ul-Ahaadeeth ad-Da'eefah* (5247). There, I brought out the hidden defect it had in it, which was hidden to me and to Al-Haythamee before me!

[48] This is a portion of a hadeeth from 'Aa'ishah reported by Al-Bukharee, Muslim and Ibn Khuzaimah in their *Saheeh* collections. I have referenced it in *Saheeh Sunan Abee Dawood* (2127)

[49] Reported by Al-Bukharee, Muslim and Ibn Khuzaimah. The extra addition is from Al-Bukhaaree in one narration as is stated in my abridgment to it (995). And it is referenced in *Saheeh Sunan Abee Dawood* (2136-2137) also.

[50] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Ibn Khuzaimah in their *Saheeh* collections and it is referenced in the previously mentioned source (2126-2130)

[51] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim and Ibn Khuzaimah (2223) and it is referenced in *Al-Irwaa* (966) and *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (2125)

1. It's observance is not legislated except in the masaajid, based on Allaah's saying: **"And do not have intercourse with them (your wives) while you are making 'Itikaaf in the masaajid."** [Surah Al-Baqarah: 187.][52] And 'Aa'ishah said: **"The Sunnah for the one doing 'Itikaaf is that he should not go out (of the masjid) except for some need that he must fulfill. He should not witness a funeral, nor should he touch his wife, or have intercourse with her. And there is no 'Itikaaf except in a masjid that establishes the *Jamaa'ah* (congregational prayer). And the Sunnah for the one doing 'Itikaaf is that he should be fasting (on the day he makes 'Itikaaf)."**[53]

2. The masjid should also hold the Jumu'ah prayers so that he is not forced to leave it in order to pray the Jumu'ah prayer, since going out for it would be an obligation. This is based on 'Aa'ishah's saying in one of the narrations from the previous hadeeth: **"...and there is no 'Itikaaf except in a masjid that holds the Jumu'ah prayer."** [54]

Furthermore, I came upon an authentic hadeeth that clearly specifies the **"masaajid"** mentioned in the previous ayah to mean the three masaajid: Al-Masjid Al-Haraam, Al-Masjid An-Nabawee and Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa. The hadeeth is: **"There is no 'Itikaaf except in the three masaajid."** [55]

According to what I came across, those among the Salaf who held this opinion were Hudhayfah bin Al-Yamaan, Sa'eed bin Al-Musayyib and 'Ataa. However, he ('Ataa) did not mention Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa. Others held the opinion that it was any congregating masjid (in which the Jumu'ah prayer is held), without restriction. And yet others disagreed saying it can even be done in the masjid of one's home. And there is no doubt that adhering to what complies with the hadeeth concerning it, is what deserves to be followed. And Allaah, Glorified and Exalted, knows best.

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[52] Imaam Al-Bukhaaree used this ayah as evidence for what we have stated above. Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr said: "The point of evidence found in this ayah is that if it were correct to do 'Itikaaf in someplace other than a masjid, the forbiddance of having sexual relations would not be specifically mentioned, because sexual intercourse is forbidden during 'Itikaaf according to the consensus of the scholars. So it is understood through the mentioning of **"masaajid"** that the meaning is that 'Itikaaf is not correct except in them, i.e. the masaajid.

[53] Reported by Al-Bayhaqee with an authentic chain, and Abu Dawood with a sound chain. The following narration from 'Aa'ishah is also from Abu Dawood, and it is referenced in *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (2135) and *Al-Irwaa* (966)

[54] Al-Bayhaqee reported from Ibn 'Abbaas that he said: **"Verily, the most hated of things to Allaah are innovations. And verily from the innovations is making 'Itikaaf in the masaajid that are located in the houses."**

[55] Reported by At-Tahaawee, Al-Isma'eelee and Al-Bayhaqee with an authentic chain of narration on Hudhaifah bin Al-Yamaan. And it is referenced in *As-Saheehah* (no. 2786) along with the narrations from the Companions that comply with it, and all of them are authentic.

3. It is from the Sunnah for the one making 'Itikaaf to observe fasting, as has been stated by 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*).[56]

What is permissible for the person making 'Itikaaf:

1. It is permissible for him to leave the masjid in order to fulfill a need. It is also permissible for him to stick his head out of the masjid to have it washed and combed. 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*) said: **"The Messenger of Allaah entered his head in my presence while he was making 'Itikaaf in the masjid, and I was in my apartment. So I would comb his hair, [and in one narration: I would wash it, even though there was the threshold between me and him, and I would be menstruating], and he** (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) **would not enter the house unless he had a [human] need, while making 'Itikaaf."** [57]

2. It is permissible for the one making 'Itikaaf and others to make wudoo (ablution) in the masjid, based on the saying of a man who would serve the Prophet: **"The Prophet would make a light wudoo (ablution) in the masjid."** [58]

3. He may set up a small tent in the back of the masjid in which to make 'Itikaaf. This is since 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*) would set up a *khibaa* [59] (tent) for the Prophet when he would make 'Itikaaf. And this was from his (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) command. [60]

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[56] Reported by Al-Bayhaqee with an authentic chain of narration and Abu Dawood with a sound chain of narration. Imaam Ibn Al-Qayyim said in *Zaad Al-Ma'aad*: "It is not reported on the Prophet that he made 'Itikaaf while not fasting. Rather, 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*) said: **'There is no 'Itikaaf except with fasting.'** And furthermore, Allaah did not mention 'Itikaaf except with the fast. The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did not do it unless he was fasting. So the correct opinion is in the evidence, which the majority of the scholars adhere to: that fasting is a condition for 'Itikaaf. And this is the opinion that Shaikh-ul-Islaam Abul-'Abbaas Ibn Tamiyyah favored." And he adds to this that it is not legislated in the Religion that one who goes out to the masjid for prayer or other than that is supposed to make an intention for the amount of time he will spend in 'Itikaaf. This is what Shaikh-ul-Islaam asserted in his *Ikhtiyaaraat*.

[57] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, Ibn Abee Shaybah, and Ahmad, and the first addition belongs to these last two (mentioned). It is referenced in *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (2131-2132)

[58] Reported by Al-Bayhaqee with a good chain and Ahmad (5/364) in abridged form with an authentic chain of narration.

[59] A *khibaa* is one type of house the Arabs used to make from fur or wool, not from (animal) hair, and set up on two or three props. See *An-Nihaayah*.

[60] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim from the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah. Her doing it is stated in the report of Al-Bukhaaree and his commanding it is stated in the report of Muslim.

And one time he made 'Itikaaf in a small tent [61] that had a mat covering the *suddah* (awning) on its doorway. [62]

The Allowance of a Woman to make 'Itikaaf and visit her Husband (who is making 'Itikaaf) in the Masjid:

4. It is permissible for a woman to visit her husband while he is making 'Itikaaf. And he may walk with her to bid her farewell up to the door of the masjid, based on the saying of Safiyyah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*):

"The Prophet was making 'Itikaaf in the masjid during the last ten days of Ramadaan, so I went to visit him one night, and his wives were with him. So I spoke to him for an hour, then I got up to leave and he said: 'Don't rush, I'll go out with you.' So he got up with me to escort me out." And her dwelling used to be in the home of Usaamah bin Zayd. Then they walked until they reached the door of the masjid, which was by the door of Umm Salamah. Then two men from the Ansaar passed by and when they saw the Prophet, they rushed away. So the Prophet said: 'Slow down! This is (my wife) Safiyyah Bint Huyai' So they said: 'SubhaanAllaah, O Messenger of Allaah.' He said: 'Verily, the Devil flows through the human like the flowing of blood. And I feared lest he put some evil (thoughts) into your hearts.'" [Or he said: "something into your hearts."] [63]

In fact it is even permissible for a woman to make 'Itikaaf along with her husband in the masjid or by herself, based on the statement of 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*): **"One of the wives of Allaah's Messenger made 'Itikaaf with him while she was in a state of *Istihaada* (irregular bleeding) [in another narration it states she is Umm Salamah] and she would see red (blood) or yellowish traces (come out of her). And sometimes we put a tray beneath her when she offered the prayer."** [64]

[61] The *suddah* in the tent is like an awning over the door to protect it from rain entering. What is meant here is that a piece of mat was placed upon its awning so as to prevent anyone from looking inside. This is what As-Sindee stated. But it is more preferable to say: So that the state of the one in 'Itikaaf will not be disturbed and so he will not preoccupy himself with those who pass in front of him, in hopes to attain the goal and spirit behind 'Itikaaf. This is as Imaam Ibn Al-Qayyim stated: "This is contrary to what the ignorant ones do in that they make their place of 'Itikaaf a place where they find companionship, taking visitors and discussing portions of ahaadeeth amongst them. So this is one type and the Prophetic 'Itikaaf is another type."

[62] It is part of a hadeeth narrated by Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree, reported by Muslim and Ibn Khuzaimah in their Saheehs. It is referenced in *Saheeh Abee Dawood* (1251)

[63] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim and also Abu Dawood, and the last part of it is from him (Abu Dawood). And I referenced it in *Saheeh Sunan Abee Dawood* (2133 & 2134).

[64] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and it is referenced in *Saheeh Sunan Abee Dawood* (2138). The other narration is from Sa'eed Ibn Mansoor, as is I stated in *Fath-ul-Baaree* (4/281). However, Ad-Daarimee (1/22) says that she is Zaynab, and Allaah knows best.

And she also said: **"The Prophet would observe 'Itikaaf during the last ten days of Ramadaan, until he died. Then his wives observed 'Itikaaf after him."** [65]

There is proof in this that it is permissible for the women to make 'Itikaaf also. And there is no doubt that this is on the condition that their guardians grant them permission to do that. And it is also on the condition that the place is free from any *fitnah* and intermingling with men, based on the many evidences for that and also on the Fiqh principle: **"Preventing an evil takes precedence over bringing about a good."**

5. Having sexual intercourse nullifies one's 'Itikaaf, based on Allaah's saying: **"And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are making 'Itikaaf in the masaajid."**

And Ibn 'Abbaas (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) said: **"If the person making 'Itikaaf has sexual relations then he nullifies his 'Itikaaf and must start it over again."** [66] There is no recompense (*kaffaarah*) that is binding upon him due to a lack of anything being mentioned about that by the Prophet and his Companions.

"Glory be to You, O Allaah, and with Your Praise. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except You. I ask forgiveness of You and I repent to You."

This completes the revision, improvements, and addition of new points of benefit to the book by it's author on Fajr, Sunday the 26th of Rajab, 1406H. May Allaah send His Salaat and Salaam upon Muhammad, the unlettered Prophet, his family and Companions.

'Amaan, Jordan
Written by Muhammad
Naasir-ud-Deen Al-Albaanee

[65] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and others.
[66] Reported by Ibn Abee Shaybah (3/92) and 'Abdur-Razaaq (4/363) with an authentic chain of narration. And what is meant by his saying: **"must start it over"** is that he must renew his 'Itikaaf.